

NANTWICH RURAL DISTRICT.

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# ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND OF THE

SURVEYOR AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1897,

BY

R. T. TURNER, MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

AND

J. A. DAVENPORT, SURVEYOR AND INSPECTOR.

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# NANTWICH RURAL DISTRICT.

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Medical Officer of Health—R. T. TURNER.

Population at Census 1891—22,903.

Estimated Population in middle of 1897—23,483.

Area in Acres—98,458.

Birth-rate per 1,000 living—27·8.

Death-rate per 1,000 living—15·9.

Death-rate from seven principal Zymotic Diseases—1·3.

Deaths under one year per 1,000 births—137.

## AREA AND POPULATION—

Four Townships (Tiverton, Tilstone Fearnall, Beeston, and Burwardsley) were taken from the Nantwich Rural Sanitary District and added to the Tarvin Rural Sanitary District on July 1st, 1892. Parts of three Townships (Church Coppenhall, Shavington-cum-Gresty, and Wistaston) were taken from the Nantwich Rural Sanitary District and added to the Borough of Crewe on November 9th, 1892. The area and population of the Nantwich Rural District have therefore, since the Census, been reduced as follows:—

	Area in Acres.	Population at Census.
Nantwich R. S. D. in 1891 ... ... ... ... ...	104,932	... ... 28,326
Less portion added to Tarvin R. S. D. ... ... ... ...	5,617	... ... 1,401
Less portion added to Crewe Borough ... ... ... ...	857	... ... 4,022
	<hr/> 98,458	<hr/> 22,903

The whole district, for registration purposes, has been divided into four sub-districts. These are as follows:—

- 1.—Crewe, having an area of 31,145 acres, and an estimated population of 11,243. It includes Warmingham, Haslington, Barthomley, Crewe (including Crewe Green), Willaston, Weston, Rope, Basford, Stapeley, Walgherton, Wybunbury, Hough, Chorlton, Lea, Blakenhall, Checkley-cum-Wrinehill, Hunsterson, Doddington, Hatherton, Batherton, and parts of Church Coppenhall, Shavington-cum-Gresty, and Wistaston.
- 2.—Nantwich, having an area of 21,300 acres, and an estimated population of 3,528. It includes Coole Pilate, Austerson, Baddington, Edleston, Burland, Faddiley, Brindley, Acton, Henhull, Hurleston, Poole, Stoke, Cholmondeston, Aston-juxta-Mondrum, Worleston, Alvaston, Woolstanwood, Leighton, and Minshull Vernon.
- 3.—Bunbury, having an area of 15,845 acres, and an estimated population of 3,105. It includes Church Minshull, Wettenhall, Bunbury, Alpraham, Calveley, Wardle, Haughton, Spurstow, Ridley, and Peckforton.
- 4.—Wrenbury, having an area of 30,168 acres, and an estimated population of 5,597. It includes Chorley, Wrenbury-cum-Frith, Woodcott, Broomhall, Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley, Sound, Audlem, Buerton, Hankelow, Baddiley, Newhall, Cholmondeley, Egerton, Bickerton, and Bulkeley.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS (General).—In 1897 the number of births registered in the district was 653, and the number of deaths registered in the district (including 8 which took place in the Workhouse in the Urban District of Nantwich, and excluding 22 which occurred in the Workhouse Men's Hospital, among persons not belonging to the Rural District) was 365.

The birth-rates for the four sub-districts were respectively 27·1, 26·8, 29·9, 26·9. The death-rates of these four sub-districts were respectively, 15·2, 19·2, 14·0, 14·4. In calculating the death-rate for the Nantwich sub-district the correction for the deaths of non-residents of the Rural District has been made.

The birth-rate for the whole district is 0·3 below the mean birth-rate for the five years 1892-96. The death-rate for the whole district is 0·8 above the mean death-rate for the five years 1892-96.

The number of births registered in the first quarter was 179, in the second 177, in the third 164, and in the fourth 133. The number of deaths registered in the first quarter was 112, in the second 114, in the third 74, and in the fourth 79. The numbers are uncorrected for non-residents.

INFANT MORTALITY.—Ninety of the deaths recorded were of infants under one year of age. The causes of death were as follows :—Whooping Cough, 5 ; Diarrhoea, 7 ; Measles, 2 ; Erysipelas, 1 ; Convulsions, 14 ; Bronchitis and Pneumonia, 16 ; Marasmus, 11 ; Congenital Heart Disease, 1 ; Thrush, 1 ; Tubercular Peritonitis, 1 ; Imperforate Anus, 1 ; "Natural Causes," 1 ; Phthisis, 1 ; Inanition, 4 ; Spina Bifida, 3 ; Heart Disease, 1 ; Debility, 6 ; Premature Birth, 7 ; Tabes Mesenterica, 2 ; Hydrocephalus, 1 ; "Disease, nature unascertained," 1 ; Meningitis, 1 ; Atrophy, 1. The total number of deaths under one year of age was 90, which is equivalent to a death-rate of 137 per 1,000 births registered. In other words, of 1,000 infants born 137 die before reaching the age of twelve months. This rate is not particularly high. Of the deaths under one year of age 31 occurred during the first, 23 during the second, 18 during the third, and 18 during the fourth quarter of the year.

DEATHS FROM ZYMIC DISEASE.—The number of deaths ascribed to the principal zymotic diseases was 35, which gives a zymotic death-rate of 1·3 per 1,000 living at all ages. One other death was ascribed to zymotic disease, that of a tramp dying at the Workhouse Men's Hospital from typhoid fever. As he was a non-resident of the district his death is not counted in calculating the zymotic death-rate.

The deaths occurring as the result of the various diseases were as follows :—Scarlet Fever, 4 ; Diphtheria, 3 ; Erysipelas, 2 ; Measles, 3 ; Whooping Cough, 11 ; Diarrhoea, 12.

- (a) SCARLET FEVER.—In January there was a death from this disease at Warmingham. In May there was one at Willaston. In June there was a second death from the same disease at Willaston, and in December there was one at Haslington. The deaths all occurred among children, the ages at death being respectively 2 years, 3 years, 6 years, and 2 years.
- (b) DIPHTHERIA.—This disease was responsible for three deaths during the year, one at Bridgemere in January, one at Wybunbury in November, and one at Faddiley in December. The deaths all occurred among children, the ages at death being respectively 6 years, 5 years, and 16 months. These were all sporadic cases, and there was no epidemic prevalence of the disease.
- (c) TYPHOID FEVER.—No deaths from this disease were registered as occurring among residents of the district. The death which occurred at the Workhouse Men's Hospital was that of a tramp, who had certainly not contracted the disease in the district.
- (d) PUERPERAL FEVER.—No deaths were ascribed to this cause.
- (e) ERYSIPELAS.—Two deaths were ascribed to this cause, one at Willaston in September, that of an infant of 20 days, and one at Church Coppenhall in November, that of a woman of 69 years of age.
- (f) MEASLES.—Three deaths were ascribed to this disease. They all occurred among young children, and all had respiratory complications as the immediate cause of death.
- (g) WHOOPING COUGH.—This disease caused eleven deaths during the year. The deaths all occurred among children, of whom the eldest was 7 years, and the youngest two months old.

- (h) DIARRHŒA.—Twelve deaths occurred as the result of this disease. Of these seven occurred in the summer, two in the autumn, one in the spring, and two in the winter months.
- (i) INFLUENZA,—Four deaths were ascribed to this disease, viz.: one at Haslington, one at Willaston, one at Bunbury, and one at Minshull Vernon. The ages at death were respectively 61 years, 40 years, 18 months, and 63 years.

LUNG DISEASES.—The gross number of deaths registered as occurring as the result of phthisis (pulmonary consumption) was 19. Of these three occurred at the Workhouse Infirmary among non-residents of the rural district. The number of deaths of rural residents was therefore 16. This is equal to a death-rate of 0·67 per 1,000 living. Bronchitis and pneumonia were the registered cause of 76 deaths belonging to the district. This is equal to a death-rate of 3·2. The death-rate from phthisis was lower by 0·31 than in 1896, and the death-rate from bronchitis and pneumonia was higher by 0·4.

HEART DISEASE.—The deaths from the various forms of heart disease numbered for the rural district 39. The death-rate from heart disease is 1·6 per 1,000 living.

DEATHS FROM INJURIES.—Thirteen deaths were ascribed to injuries. Of these, eleven were on inquiry found to be the result of accident, while in two cases the question of accident, suicide, or homicide, was left open. The registered causes of death were as follows:—

Killed by express train on L. and N.-W. Railway .....	1 case.
Run over by threshing machine.....	1 ,,
Accidentally drowned .....	3 cases.
Found drowned.....	2 ,,
" Accidental death " .....	2 ,,
Fall.....	1 case.
Kicked by a colt .....	1 ,,
Accidentally burnt to death .....	2 cases.

CORONER'S INQUESTS.—Inquests were held in 24 cases, viz., in 13 cases of injury and 11 cases of disease. In the cases of injury the findings of the jury were as given in the preceding paragraph, while in the other 11 cases the verdicts were expressed variously as "death from natural causes," or "disease, nature unascertained." In none of the 11 cases was the actual cause of death discovered, no *post-mortem* examinations appearing to have been made.

SICKNESS.—In all, 143 cases of dangerous infectious disease have come to the knowledge of the District Council. The cases of the various diseases have been as follows:—

Scarlet fever, 117; typhoid fever, 4; diphtheria, 11; puerperal fever, 1; erysipelas, 10.

- (a) SCARLET FEVER.—Early in January a death from malignant scarlet fever was reported from Warmingham. Several other children in the same house became infected, but recovered. On March 17th two cases were reported from Brindley. I visited the cases, which were at two separate farmhouses in the township. No other source of infection except the schools could be found. These were visited, when it was discovered that several children had been away from school with suspicious illnesses, and that one at least had "peeled." On inspecting the schoolchildren several cases of sore throat were discovered, but it was impossible to say at that time whether they were cases of scarlet fever or not. The closure of the school was at once requested, and was successful in checking the outbreak, since no further houses were invaded, though two new cases occurred at one of the originally infected houses.

During the second quarter cases were reported from Bunbury, Aston, Leighton, Spurstow, Haslington, Wrenbury, Church Coppenhall, Cholmondeley, Brindley, Willaston, and Worleston. In all the townships excepting Willaston and Worleston the outbreaks were confined to a single house. At Willaston, however, five houses were infected, and two deaths occurred, and at Worleston four houses were invaded.

During the third quarter cases were reported from Audlem, Haslington, Willaston, Alpraham, Coole Pilate, Haughton, Worleston, Alvaston, Edleston, Spurstow, and Warmingham. The Audlem cases appeared to me to derive their infection from a family which had had scarlet fever in the early part of the year, and had lately moved to Audlem without having their clothing, &c., adequately disinfected. The Warmingham cases, three in number, were part of a small epidemic which existed there and in the adjoining townships of the Congleton Rural District.

During the fourth quarter cases were reported from Haslington, Willaston, Crewe, Blakenhall, Hurleston, Wettenhall, Dodcott, Calveley, Aston, Worleston, Hunsterson, and Warmingham. At Willaston seven houses were infected. At Haslington and Crewe 25 cases occurred, among which, were two pupil teachers at the schools. The infection of the teachers, and other circumstances, led to the belief that infection had been communicated at school.

- (b) DIPHTHERIA.—A fatal case of this disease occurred at Bridgemere early in January, the patient being a boy aged 5 years; shortly afterwards another patient in the same house took the disease, but fortunately recovered. The cottage where the cases occurred was made the subject of statutory notice as regarded its drainage and other sanitary conditions, and has been greatly improved. A case occurred at Faddiley in April, at a farm house, and a doubtful case at Willaston in June. Both cases made good recoveries. Two cases occurred during the third quarter, one at Shavington, in an elderly woman, and one in a child at Haughton. The farm house where the latter case occurred required considerable improvement as to drainage, which I am glad to say has been put right.

During the fourth quarter eight cases occurred ; of these, three (of which one proved fatal) existed at one cottage at Faddiley, one (which also proved fatal) at Wybunbury, one at a small farm house at Haslington, one at a large house at Bunbury, one at a farm house at Calveley, and one at a farm house at Chorlton.

- (c) TYPHOID FEVER.—A fatal case, occurring in a tramp, was notified from the Men's Hospital, Nantwich Workhouse; the man had tramped from Bristol, and was well advanced in the disease before he arrived in this district. Three cases were notified during the fourth quarter of the year. Of these, one, which was probably infected in Italy, was notified from Church Minshull, one from a cottage at Haslington, and one from a small farm house at Warmingham. All these cases recovered.
- (d) PUERPERAL FEVER.—A mild case of this disease was reported from Shavington on December 6th. The case made a good recovery.
- (e) ERYSIPelas.—Ten cases of this disease (of which two were fatal) came to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health during the year.
- (f) MEASLES.—This disease was epidemic in and around Minshull Vernon in the later weeks of March and the early weeks of April.
- (g) WHOOPING COUGH appeared in various places during the year, but I was not informed of any severe epidemic prevalence. The disease was responsible for eleven deaths.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.—Since April 4th the district has had the advantage of compulsory notification of infectious disease. The method of procedure on receipt of a notification has been as follows :—On the same evening an intimation of the outbreak is sent to the Master or Mistress of the school or schools attended by the family, and the exclusion of the family from school is requested. At the same time papers of instruction are sent to the head of the family, and as soon as practicable the case is visited by the Inspector and myself, when sanitary conditions are noted and instructions and disinfectants given.

School-closure has been necessary on several occasions during the year. The Faddiley School was closed for a fortnight on March 17th, on account of an outbreak of scarlet fever; the Bradfield Green School was closed for a fortnight on April 17th, on account of measles; the Wrenbury School was closed for six weeks on May 10th, on account of an outbreak of scarlet fever in the master's family; the Warmingham School was

closed for four weeks on September 30th, on account of an outbreak of scarlet fever; and the Haslington and Crewe Green Schools were closed on December 23rd for a month, on account of a sharp outbreak of scarlet fever.

**FOOD INSPECTION.**—A quarter of beef was seized at Shavington on February 14th. It was part of a carcase of which the other parts were seized in the Borough of Crewe. A Magistrate's order for its destruction was obtained, and it was as soon as possible destroyed. A conviction for using an unregistered slaughterhouse was subsequently obtained against the owner of the carcase.

**ISOLATION OF INFECTIOUS CASES.**—No provision for the isolation of the infectious sick away from their own homes has so far been made by the District Council. The cases have to be nursed at home, and in the ordinary cottage efficient isolation is almost an impossibility. As a consequence, in very few cases (of scarlet fever at all events) is the disease confined to a single member of a family, and in too many cases the disease spreads beyond the limits of the family. When the large area to be superintended by your officers is taken into consideration, it will readily be seen that it is impossible to keep up that constant supervision of cases that is so desirable if spread of infection must be prevented. Your Medical Officer of Health is of opinion that a small Isolation Hospital would be of the highest value to the district, and if only the four deaths registered during the year as due to scarlet fever could have been prevented the expenditure on Hospital provision would have been well repaid.

**DISINFECTION.**—The present lack of apparatus for the disinfection of clothing and bedding has been several times commented upon. Your Medical Officer of Health considers that the Council would be well advised to make some provision for the disinfection of unwashable articles by means of steam.

**DRAINAGE.**—Nothing further has so far been done with respect to any general system of sewerage in the larger villages of the district. A scheme for the drainage of a small portion of the village of Haslington has, however, been considered, and has been decided upon. It will doubtless shortly be carried out. Some method of more effectually dealing with the sewage of the rest of Haslington, and of Audlem, Bunbury, Willaston, and Shavington requires the attention of the District Council.

**RIVERS POLLUTION.**—The pollution of the River Weaver by the sewage of Nantwich and Crewe has several times during the year been complained of. The tributary, North Brook, which appears to receive the greater part of the Crewe sewage effluent, has more especially been the subject of complaint. Its condition is generally bad, shows very distinct evidence of the presence of crude sewage, and is said to be especially objectionable on Saturday nights and Sundays, when, presumably, pumping operations at the sewage farm are more or less suspended. The deleterious effects of this polluted water on cattle which are compelled to drink it cannot be small, and your Medical Officer of Health is of opinion that the District Council might well call for an improvement.

**NUISANCES FROM THE DEPOSIT OF ASHES.**—A number of complaints have been made of nuisance from the deposit in the Rural District of ash-pit refuse from the Borough of Crewe.

**WATER SUPPLY.**—During the year 116 fresh houses have been supplied from the Council's mains, and  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles of new mains have been laid, making a total of 3,348 houses supplied and 122 miles of mains laid since the work of general water supply was first undertaken. Further works of water supply are in contemplation at Spurstow, Church Minshull, Cholmondeley, Haslington, Alpraham, Calveley, Egerton, Burland, and Baddiley. The present water supply of Audlem has received a large amount of attention during the year. A committee of the District Council held an inquiry at Audlem on August 5th. A report, drawn up by the Surveyor and the Medical Officer of Health, was presented to this Committee. This report stated that 177 houses were supplied with water by pumps and wells, that 95 houses were without any supply of their own, and that 52 houses were supplied by dip-wells at varying distances from the houses. It also stated that your officers were of opinion that a large number of the existing wells, from their surroundings and position, and from the appearance of their waters, were open to suspicion. It was pointed out that well waters in a place where houses were crowded together, where drainage was not good, and where also a large churchyard existed at a higher elevation, could not help being liable to pollution. This report was embodied by the Committee in their report, which recommended that analyses of representative waters be obtained, that,

should the analyses be favourable, notice be served on the owners to supply their properties with water within twelve months, and, that if the owners failed to comply with these notices or if the report of the Analyst was unfavourable, the Council take such further steps as should seem advisable. The Council did not adopt this Report of their Committee ; but decided to at once serve notice on the owners without first having the quality of the existing waters ascertained.

There certainly appeared to be a strong feeling among a section of the inhabitants of Audlem against any works of public water supply ; but your Medical Officer of Health cannot but regret that the Council did not take steps to prove the quality of existing waters before embarking on this course which, if successful, will certainly put off for a long time the provision of a really unexceptionable supply from water mains, which may not be successful, since it is clear that in many cases water could not be obtained at a cost within the limits allowed by the Water Act, and which, at the best, will only succeed in supplying the township with waters of medium or poor quality, or, at any rate, with waters more or less liable to pollution and open to suspicion.

The report of Mr. Davenport, Surveyor and Inspector, is appended hereto. From it will be gathered how numerous are the duties which devolve upon him. The usual statistical tables are also appended.

In conclusion, I have to express my sincere thanks to the Members of the District Council, for their courtesy and kindness to me during the year, to the Medical Men of the district for their co-operation, and to the School Masters and School Mistresses of the various schools for the great help they have uniformly afforded me in searching for the origin of infectious outbreaks, and in trying to prevent epidemic prevalence of infectious disease.

R. T. TURNER, M.D.,

Nantwich,

Medical Officer of Health.

February 5th, 1898.

[A] *Table of Deaths during the Year 1897, in the Nantwich Rural District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.*

MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES,  
AT SUBJOINED AGES.

NAMES OF LOCALITIES (Columns for Population and Births are in Table B.)	MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.									
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	Total
Registration Sub-District of Crewe .....	55	17	8	4	41	46	{ Under 5 5 upwards	3 0 1 2	1 2 8	All other Diseases
Nantwich .....	82	12	7	2	5	18	{ Under 5 5 upwards	1 1 1 1	1 1 5	7 100
Bunbury .....	45	8	4	1	18	13	{ Under 5 5 upwards	1 1 1 1	1 1 5	19
Wrenbury .....	81	15	6	4	...	23	{ Under 5 5 upwards	1 1 1 1	1 1 5	63
TOTALS.....	379	90	34	15	10	100	{ Under 5 5 upwards	3 1 1 2	1 1 2 10	12 33
At all ages.										255
1 and under 1 year.										
5 and under 5.										
15 and under 25.										
25 and under 65.										
65 and upwards.										

Area in Acres, 98,458.  
Population (Last Census) 22,503.  
(middle of 1897) 23,483.

to which this Return relates.

Area and Population of the District or Division

Deaths per 1,000 Population  
General ..... 15.9  
Infant (under 1 year) ..... 13.7  
Per 1,000 Births  
One year of age ..... 137  
Middle of 1897

Registration Sub-District to  
which estimated to 1897

Deaths per 1,000 Births  
General ..... 15.9  
Infant (under 1 year) ..... 137  
Per 1,000 Births  
One year of age ..... 137

Registration Sub-District to  
which estimated to 1897

Deaths per 1,000 Births  
General ..... 15.9  
Infant (under 1 year) ..... 137  
Per 1,000 Births  
One year of age ..... 137

[B] *Table of Population, Births, and of New Cases of Infectious Sickness, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the Year 1897, in the Nantwich Rural District; classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.*

NUMBER OF SUCH CASES REMOVED FROM THEIR HOMES IN THE SEVERAL LOCALITIES FOR TREATMENT IN ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

POPULATION AT ALL AGES.	NEW CASES OF SICKNESS IN EACH LOCALITY, COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.									
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	FEVERS.
NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.										
Registration Sub-District of (a)										
Crewe .....	10,663	11,243	315	{ Under 5 5 upwards	1 2	3	4	5	6	Erysipelas.
Nantwich .....	3,538	3,538	95	{ Under 5 5 upwards	70	6	...	...	10	Cholera.
Bunbury .....	3,105	3,105	93	{ Under 5 5 upwards	33	4	...	1	11	Typhoid.
Wrenbury .....	5,597	5,597	150	{ Under 5 5 upwards	10	1	...	...	12	Relapsing.
TOTALS.....	22,903	23,483	653	{ Under 5 5 upwards	117	11	...	4	13	Continued.
At all ages.										
1 and under 1 year.										
5 and under 5.										
15 and under 25.										
25 and under 65.										
65 and upwards.										

State whether "Notification of Infectious Disease" is compulsory in the District:—Yes; since April 4th, 1897. There is no Isolation Hospital for the District.

# SURVEYOR'S AND INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1897.

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**INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.**—The inspections of premises in the townships which comprise the Nantwich Rural District have resulted in the service of statutory notices with respect to 185 premises within the year 1897. New drainage has been laid at 66 houses, new privies and covered ash-pits have been erected or old ones altered at 86 houses. Other permanent sanitary improvements have been made at 16 houses, and various nuisances not included under other heads have been abated at 35 houses. In 87 cases the nuisances have either not already been abated or are in course of being abated, or are waiting reinspection. A certain number of nuisances have been abated without formal notices. No houses have been closed as dwellings during the year.

**EXCREMENT DISPOSAL.**—In connection with the Scavenging Contract in Haslington, 471 inspections have been made, with that of Willaston 1,528, with that of Shavington 464, and with that of Audlem 370, making a total of 2,833 inspections made during the year with respect to these contracts. The work on the whole has been carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner.

**WATER SUPPLY.**—One hundred and sixteen houses have been newly supplied with water from public mains during 1897. Rather more than three miles of water mains have been laid. The total number of houses that have now been supplied by the Council is 3,348, and the total length of mains, 122 miles. There have been 51 inspections under the Public Health Water Act with respect to new houses, &c. Sixteen waters have been analysed, two of which proved good, six bad, seven were second-class waters, and one of doubtful purity. New pumps have been put down, and private water supplies improved in various instances, as in Wrenbury and in other townships.

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE.**—One hundred and forty-three cases of infectious disease have been visited during the year, papers and instructions given, and disinfectants distributed.

**DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.**—Dairies and cowsheds have been inspected as far as possible. It is a matter of regret that more could not have been done under this head. A certain laxity has been reported with respect to purveyors of milk, and instructions have been given by the Council that notices under the "Dairies, &c., Order" be again posted throughout the district. The existence of the "Order" seems to have been forgotten by those who should have observed it and the byelaws made under it.

**SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.**—One new slaughter-house has been licensed during the year. Slaughter-houses have been inspected, and two convictions before the magistrates have been obtained for breaches of the law and regulations.

**CANAL BOATS.**—A copy of the annual report to the Local Government Board accompanies this report.

**NEW BUILDINGS.**—Fifty-one plans for new buildings have been sanctioned by the Council during 1897, making a total of 1,839 plans for new buildings passed in the district since these urban powers were first granted. New buildings have to be inspected during erection and after completion.

**LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.**—Convictions have been obtained in the two instances where legal proceedings were taken before the Magistrates.

**GENERAL.**—Reports from Parish Councils have necessitated a considerable amount of work. Inspections for the Boarding-out Committee have been made, and reports furnished. Work in connection with the great waterworks in the district grows heavier year by year, and the future seems to foreshadow the requirements of even more extensive supervision. Public lighting in the different townships is growing and likely to grow, and necessarily requires attention. Sewage works cannot be neglected, and the future would seem likely to bring increased responsibility under this head. The business of the various departments during the past year has necessitated the writing of one thousand three hundred and fifty letters. The monthly, annual, and other reports made, the certifying of accounts, and the ordinary routine of office and outdoor work, measuring up work, keeping the various books, &c., all go to make up a total of occupation which may be termed very considerable ! !

JOHN ALDERSEY DAVENPORT,

February, 1898.

Surveyor and Inspector.

NANTWICH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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REPORT OF INSPECTIONS UNDER THE CANAL BOATS ACTS FOR THE YEAR 1897.

Forty-two boats have been inspected in all their details during the year 1897, and their state and condition entered on the pages of the Journal. Twenty boats entirely confirmed to the Acts and Regulations, and on twenty-two boats one or more infringements were found.

In only one instance (the Oscar) was there an entire absence of the certificate, and again in one case only (the John) did the certificate not identify the owner with the boat. This is a better record than that of last year on these two particular points. No infringement of the marking regulations were noted. In four instances boats were overcrowded, and in one instance, there was no partition separating the sexes, according to Regulation 8, and "the hand" occupied the cabin with the captain and his wife. I found no cases of females over 12 years of age improperly occupying cabins. Six cases of want of cleanliness in the cabins of boats are recorded, and these were chiefly in connection with boats that were dilapidated, and in much need of repairs. The repainting of the cabins of eight boats was required. I have no fault to find in connection with the ventilation of the cabins. Dilapidations have been recorded with respect to fifteen boats, and some of these were of a very urgent character. The regulations with respect to the removal of bilge water, and as to pumps, were not found to be infringed. Except in four instances, proper water vessels were found upon each boat. The bulkheads were all as required by the regulations, and I am glad to report that no cases of Infectious Disease have been known upon the boats during the year.

With respect to myself, I have found no hindrance in the carrying out of my duties, generally indeed, very cheerful co-operation. It will be noted that the proportion of boats not carrying sufficient water vessels is very much less than in the last year's report.

Forty infringements altogether of the Acts have been noted during 1897, and in all cases the owners of the boats have promised to remedy what has been complained of. I have to acknowledge the courtesy of the General Manager of the Shropshire Union Canal Company, who has sent me reports of what has been done in connection with each boat where complaints have been made. The inspections of boats subsequently have confirmed these reports. A case of gross overcrowding complained of to this Council by the Drayton Rural District Council was very promptly dealt with by Mr. Hales, after I had submitted the facts to him, and the result elicited the thanks of the Drayton Council to this Council. No legal proceedings have been taken during the year.

The number of the women on the boats inspected was found to be twenty-six, and the number of the children thirty-three, fourteen of whom were between the ages of five and twelve years; and nineteen were children of five years old and under. On eighteen boats there were no women and children, and twenty-four boats had women and children on board. In twenty-six cases the boats were the homes of the crews, and in sixteen cases the captains had homes apart from their boats.

The economic question operates powerfully in keeping the women and children on the boats. It would seem more desirable, however, if children could be kept off the boats, and so be enabled to obtain a continuous education. This would probably require that the mothers should stay at home also, but surely this would not be a matter for very great regret.

JOHN ALDERSEY DAVENPORT,

January, 1898.

Inspector under the Canal Boats Acts.

